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a magnificent assemblage of mountains, towering among the mists, and magnified by the rain. We returned through Little Langdale; through Yew-dale, with its venerable yew-trees; and through the delightful valley of Thilberthwaite, with its hundred woody knowls. The rain was now pouring down upon us, and the brooks were rising as we passed along; the scenes must have been beautiful, and we must have had a disposition for enjoying them, when, drenched as we were with rain, we were still pleased and interested. If hedges or rivulets crossed our way, and I lamented our difficulties, there was never anything worse than a smile on the part of my companions. The walls were climbed, and the rivulets were waded; and after being eleven hours on our feet, and walking between 20 and 30 miles, we arrived at home in safety. Our return was crowned with no light felicity, in seeing Captain Smith again amongst his family, as in the morning it was not certain but he might be gone with his regiment to Egypt.

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*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine,*

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#### ON THE ROUND TOWERS OF IRELAND.

THERE are no buildings in this kingdom, perhaps in Europe, that have caused so much discussion as the Round Towers of this country; for as there are no literary memorials of the exact time of their erection, nor by whom, conjecture has been nearly exhausted in the inquiries concerning them.

Though history is silent as to the age of their erection, founders, or use; yet the minute researches of Antiquarians leave little room to doubt of their having been erected by the Danes for belfries; which opinion, respecting their use, is con-

firmed by their shape, for though they differ in many respects, yet all have four apertures near the top, answering to the cardinal points, evidently to let out the sound.

The tower of Ardmore, in the Co. of Waterford, fully confirms the opinion, that they were belfries; for near the top, inside, are still three pieces of oak, evidently for hanging a bell. There are also two channels cut in the cill of the door, where the rope may be supposed to have come out, the ringer standing outside. This tower is well built of hewn stone, which leads to the conjecture, that its erection is much later than some have imagined; and in the Round Tower at Roscrea, thirty feet from the ground, is a window with a pointed arch, which reduces its date at least to the twelfth century, as such arches were not used in buildings prior to that time.

If such plain facts respecting the time of their erection and use, required any confirmation, it receives it from Giraldus Cambrensis, who came over to this country with King John, and is the first author who notices them. He calls them *Turres Ecclesiasticas*, Ecclesiastical Towers; a name from which we may fairly infer their use at that time: and an author, highly distinguished for his knowledge in Irish antiquities, supposes, with some probability, that Giraldus Cambrensis even saw them while they were building.

Their shape is believed, and perhaps justly, to be taken from the monumental stones and obelisks, anciently used by the Pagan inhabitants; for history demonstrates, that it is no easy matter to eradicate a system, especially one that had continued so long as the Pagan.

The present age is certainly not a little fruitful in theories, of which the Round Towers come in for a sufficient share. Dr. Milner, and

## 6 Protest against Equalizing the Regium Donum. [July.

a few others have supposed them to have been the residence of anchorite monks; while some possessed of what we may (without being accused of ill-nature) call *vigorous imaginations*, laying aside common sense, boldly enter the labyrinth of etymology, and assert them to have been reared by the Phenicians for fire-altars! That is, places where they say the Magi kept the sacred fires from which all others were kindled, at May, and Hallow-eve; all other fires, according to these authors, being extinguished at such periods.

A late essayist has given us a pretty sufficient portion of romance on the antiquity of our stone-buildings, particularly our Round Towers, which, he says, were built by the Phenicians for fire-temples! After which strange assertion, and some weak attempts at irony, against those who disbelieve such whimsies, he exultingly exclaims, "Let those authors descend into our subterranean caves, and they shall find them well built with ruble stone, or let them ascend into the second cave, in the Cave hill, near Belfast, and they will conclude, they shall have no occasion to run into forests or woods, to look for the principles of the Gothic arch." Notwithstanding this cavalier paragraph, in which doubtless he conceives to have pointed out some excellent *specimens* of our ancestor's skill in architecture, I believe I may safely affirm, that were the unbelievers of his system of antiquities to run to Cave-hill to examine those fine *samples*, the assembly held there on Easter Mondays would bear but a small proportion to their numbers.

Dunsea.

L.C.N.

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To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

By inserting the following, which

I conceive to be somewhat curious, and well adapted for the perusal of many of your readers, you will much oblige one of your subscribers, and a constant peruser of your valuable magazine. L.

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REASONS of Protest by the Rev. Mr. Lowry, of Clonane, against an overture for equalizing the Royal Bounty, introduced into the Synod of Burgher Seceders, met at Cookstown, July, 1810.

1st. **R**EASON.—This overture is contrary to the nature of a Spiritual court. Tending to infringe upon the properties of others, and thereby destroying the civil rights of society.

2d.—Because such an overture is a breach of the tenth commandment, originating in covetousness; for though some in the first class may approve of it, their approbation can no more sanction it, than the suicide's conduct sanction self-murder, both transgressing God's law, by an infringement on their own rights.

3d.—Because such an overture, in an assembly wherein all are not on a level in the subject matter of the overture, is unfair. Those in the inferior classes judging and voting from interested motives.

4th.—Because such an equalization intended by the overture, doth not tend to spread the gospel, but to increase the wealth of some, at the expense of others, a vote having been carried in a former day for a voluntary subscription for said purpose of spreading the gospel.

5th.—Because this overture expresses, in subordination to the civil rulers, disaffection to the laws of the land, *in this case*. "It now being an ordinance of man, demands submission for the Lord's sake."—I. Peter, 2.—13.

6th.—Admit the principle of e-